"The new year stands before us, like a chapter in a book, waiting to be written."
- Melody Beattie, American Author
Envisioning a Bright Future  
By Dennis W. Streets, Executive Director [Be Bold, Claim Old: Age 67]

My Grandpa, Benjamin Franklin Streets, was the youngest of seven sons of Lees Street and Elizabeth Price, originally of Oldham in the far northwest of England.

In 1864, the family emigrated to the United States, settling in the Pennsylvania coal mining area. I imagine that as they departed their British homeland for a trip across the Atlantic they prayed for a safe journey and realization of their longing for a brighter future. I can’t imagine they had perfect 2020 vision about what would be their circumstance, even as they neared the U.S. shore.

While quite anxious, they must have longed to be part of that period’s Industrial Revolution. They were escaping decaying conditions in pursuit of a dream. They may or may not have been welcomed by those who came before them.

Lees Street worked in the coal mines, with six of his seven sons (including my grandfather who started mining at age 10 and left the mine 55 years later). You can tell from my grandfather’s name how much his parents appreciated the opportunity to migrate to the United States.

Now about 150 years later, my oldest son Clark Benjamin (with a middle name to honor my grandfather), is a graduate student at the London School of Economics and Political Science. I imagine my grandfather would be proud that his namesake is studying global immigration and plans to contribute in ways to enable other families to realize our experience.

In July 1974, a dedicated group of Chatham residents envisioned the importance of a Council on Aging to help seniors remain living safely in the community. They created the Chatham County Council on Aging as a non-profit organization with a Board of Directors to guide and support achievement of this mission. Over the past 45 years, many dedicated community leaders, staff members, volunteers and others have helped our Council evolve to earn local and state recognition for excellence in service.

In many ways, though, our Council has remained largely the same—enlisting the same values, with community support, to achieve a similar purpose. But we have also evolved to meet the needs and interests of a Chatham that is both different and the same as our founders knew.

As I wrote in a previous newsletter, I first moved to Chatham in 1972. I remember seeing the Senior Center located in the Hill House, across from the St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church in Pittsboro. Despite our rather dramatic growth and the influx of many newcomers, I still feel the caring and sharing that makes us a wonderful community.

Back in 1974, most older adults wanted to remain living in their homes—just as they do today. To respond to this desire and the need for assistance and community engagement, our Council has changed dramatically in the scope of programs and services. On the back of the newsletter, you can see a long list of the many ways we have responded. This list appears to grow with each new year.

As shown in the demographic data presented in the newsletter, we are experiencing dramatic population growth, especially among our older population. With the aging of our population, we can surely...
expect increased service needs. Not as predictable is federal and state support to match this growing need.

Our federal and state funding for home and community services has stayed flat at best over the past few years, and our federal/state transportation funding was actually cut in half this year. If not for the support of the County and of individual donors, we would be in a “world of hurt.”

This situation requires creativity, a clear focus and strong community support. Here is but one example of what I mean.

With very limited public funding for family caregiver respite, we are working to establish another option for caregivers. We are seeking at least 13 churches and a group of trained volunteers to work with us. Each church would offer a morning of respite 4 times per year. Called R.E.S.T. (Running Errands and Sleep Time), we are about halfway there with 7 churches committed to participate in this act of love. For information about this initiative or to recommend an interested church, contact Susan.Hardy@chathamcoa.org.

This year we set a lofty goal for our Holiday Appeal of $45,000—matching our 45 years of dedicated service. In 1974, $45,000 in today’s dollars was worth $8,275. Our Council’s budget in 1974 was $10,000. Our budget this year totals about $2.5 million with most of this going to help our growing senior population remain at home through such services as Meals on Wheels, congregate meals, transportation to our two centers and to medical appointments, and for in-home personal care.

While $45,000 is a small fraction of our budget (less than 2%), it is of vital importance as one of the few sources that allows for creativity in programming (such as R.E.S.T.) and in meeting such basic operational needs as maintenance of our centers. If you haven’t already contributed to the work of our Council recently, I hope you will consider doing so. It will help us in the words of Mahatma Gandhi: “Continue to grow and evolve.”

Soon after retiring from mining at the age of 65, my Grandpa Streets began to show signs of cognitive impairment. They called it “hardening of the arteries,” but I suspect it may have been Alzheimer’s disease or some other form of dementia. He was in a very frail state for many years, living at home with my Grandma and Aunt Eva. Eva was his primary caregiver—balancing this responsibility with teaching elementary school.

Grandpa died at home in 1965. I don’t recall any community services similar to what our Council offers that could have helped him, Eva and the rest of our family.

As we enter a new year and a new decade, I hope we can be as visionary and committed as our forefathers and forerunners.

I pray we can help more persons in situations similar to my Grandpa and Aunt Eva.

I will conclude with a sentiment shared by Andy Griffith: “You know when you’re young you think you will always be. As you become more fragile, you reflect and you realize how much comfort can come from the past. Hymns can carry you into the future.”

As you celebrate and experience 2020, I ask you to join us in being proud of our past and help us envision and support a bright future—knowing that we will always be a “work in progress.”

I also encourage you to select and enjoy your own hymns to carry you into 2020.

Here is a stanza from one I will keep in mind:

Abide not in the realm of dreams,
O man, however fair it seems;
But with clear eye the present scan,
And hear the call of God and man.

(William Henry Burleigh, an active reformer and member of the Unitarian body, 1937)
Can Chatham Count on You? The Importance of the 2020 Census
by Courtney Cooper-Lewter, County Manager’s Office

Have you heard? April 1, 2020, is one of the next big things for Chatham County and the Council on Aging - it’s Census Day! Census data impacts our lives in many more ways than most people realize. It impacts how much federal and state funding the County and the Council receive. It impacts transportation routes. It even impacts the number of U.S. Congressional Representatives for our state. If you and your families are not counted, we could miss out on important resources and opportunities for Chatham. Here’s what you need to know to participate—**Be Counted**—and to share the word with others.

1 - There are multiple ways to complete the Census - **online, by phone, or by mail**. This year, for the first time, the Census will allow people to complete the questionnaire online. Households will receive a letter/postcard from the U.S. Census Bureau with an individualized code for the household. When you log on the website, you use that code to complete the Census questionnaire. If you cannot use the Internet, don’t worry! You can complete the Census by calling in and talking with a Census worker or mail in the paper form once you receive it. The paper form will arrive a few weeks after the first postcard/letter. If you do not complete the Census in these ways, you can still complete it when a Census enumerator comes to your home. But it is essential that all Chatham residents get counted!

2 - **Everyone counts**! Age, race, gender, familial status, citizenship status, political affiliation, and living situation do **not** matter. The Census counts by household and not family, so if you have family or friends living in your home - they should be included on your Census questionnaire. It doesn't matter if you rent, own, or are living with a friend, your household still counts.

3 - Your household includes **every person living at your residence on April 1, 2020**. This includes people over age 100 as well as newborns, extended family, and friends. Make sure everyone is counted.

4 - **Your data and personal information are safe**! Legally, the United States Census Bureau cannot share your information with any other government agency, business, or landlords. They use the information you provide only to create statistics about the region which then help the Federal and State Governments and others make decisions on such important matters as the allocation of funds for home and community services for older adults and their family caregivers.

5 - It’s easy - **only 10 questions every 10 years** of every household in the United States. It is intended to be simple and easy to complete.

Completing the Census is part of our civic duty to support Chatham County!

**Can Chatham count on you?**

If you have any concerns or questions, feel free to ask any staff member at the Council on Aging. There will be a presentation about the Census at the Western Center in Siler City on Monday, February 3rd, at 10 AM, and at the Eastern Center in Pittsboro, with a date TBA.
2020 Census Safety Tips
Via Census.Gov

If you are visited by someone from the Census Bureau, here are some ways to verify the individual is a Census Bureau employee:

- The field representative will present an ID badge that includes:
  - their name,
  - their photograph,
  - a Department of Commerce watermark, and
  - an expiration date.

- A field representative will be carrying an official bag with the Census Bureau logo or a laptop for conducting the survey. The field representative will provide you with a letter from the Census Bureau on official letterhead stating why they are visiting your residence.

- Field representatives conduct their work between the hours of 9am and 9pm, local time.

To verify that the survey-taker is official you can also contact the Census Bureau’s regional office at 1-800-424-6974 or TDD: (404) 730-3963.

If you receive a survey or a letter in the mail from the Census Bureau, the envelope contains certain information that will help you verify its legitimacy. For example:

- U.S. Department of Commerce in the return address. This is the Census Bureau’s parent agency.

- Jeffersonville, Indiana in the return address. Most census- and survey-related materials are mailed from, and returned to, the Census Bureau’s National Processing Center at 1201 East 10th St. in Jeffersonville, IN.

You may also receive a reminder letter from one of the Census Bureau’s regional offices or Census Bureau headquarters in the Washington, D.C. area.

As always, when in doubt give the Census Bureau’s regional office a call at the numbers above.

2020 Census Jobs
Via Census.Gov

Did you know that there are senior-friendly, temporary 2020 Census jobs available with options for accommodations for those with disabilities?

For more information and assistance with the application process, visit the Census jobs page at https://2020census.gov/en/jobs.html or call 1-855-JOB-2020 (1-855-562-2020) and select option 3. When prompted, enter your ZIP code to be routed to your area census office. You may also use the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 for TTY/ASCII.
Why I Serve

by Neriah Boone-Edwards, COA Board of Directors

Following 30 years of full-time ministry as an elder in the United Methodist Church, in the Memphis and East Ohio Annual Conferences, I returned to Chatham County to live in 2012. Chatham County is home. One of my goals in retirement was to find my “niche,” a place in the community where I could serve. It took a while; my husband was ill. Initially, my primary responsibility was his caretaker.

In 2017, I was diagnosed with tendinitis. Following rehab, I joined a fitness class offered at the Western Senior Center. The fellowship in that class is addictive, so much so that I do not miss unless there is a really good reason. In April 2018, by default, that's my reasoning, I was asked by Faye Tillman, activities director at the Western Center, to do a presentation at the center. Precisely what I would do was not defined. A few months later she asked if I would consider doing, on a monthly basis, what we now call, “Storytelling.” Beginning October 2019, I also started doing storytelling in the Eastern Center. For the last two years, I have designed the Council’s Thanksgiving program. Recently, in June 2019, I was named to the Board of Directors for the Chatham County Council on Aging. Subsequently, I’ve been trained as a Community Ambassador.

Why do I serve? When I was caring for my husband, there were persons who cared for me, persons who made the burden of whatever the circumstance a little bit lighter. I was encouraged; I found joy in the midst of sorrowful situations; I found peace in the midst of confusion. I found deliverance when I was carrying heavy loads. At the senior center, I found release, relief, and healing. I want to help others find the same by making persons aware of all that the two senior centers in Chatham County have to offer.

The blessing of growing older brings everyday challenges. No one whom I know is standing in line for the alternative to growing older, that is, dying young. I want to help seniors embrace the aging process in a positive manner, with dignity, with hope and determination. I want to help persons live life abundantly, in the midst of all the challenges that come with growing older. This is not easy; it has to do with a positive mindset. I want to bring some laughter; I want to inspire older adults to continue to live out their God-given purpose. While I am doing these things for others, I am doing them for myself. I love doing what I do and will continue to serve as long as I have strength and capability. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve in whatever capacity.

A Place for Your Planned Gift!

Thanks to the generosity of one of our donors and the 2018 GSK IMPACT Award, the Council on Aging has partnered with the Triangle Community Foundation to create a non-endowed agency fund. This fund will provide the opportunity to grow our cash reserves by participating in investment pools. This non-profit agency fund is set up to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Council. If you have questions about this fund and would like to learn more about it, please contact Lacee Monte at 919-542-4512 or lacee.monte@chathamcoa.org
Saying Good-bye to Mel and Hello to Krista

Melanie Girard, or “Mel” as we all know her, has had a long history with our Council on Aging. A Meals on Wheels volunteer for many years, Mel joined the Council in a part-time staff role in 2014 to help seniors schedule their transportation for medical appointments. Then for the past 3 ½ years Mel has served as our Development and Communications Director. It sounds like a big job and it is—and Mel has performed exceptionally well.

One cannot say enough good things about Mel and the work she has done for the Council and Chatham seniors and their families. You can thank Mel for our website, Facebook page, Senior Education Conference, and so much more. She was often the behind-the-scenes teammate helping the rest of us do our work.

I feel certain this is not the last we will see of Mel and that is certainly our hope. She has already committed herself to assist Krista Westervelt, who was selected to serve in this key position at our Council.

Krista started in December. She, too, had previously volunteered with the Council and other organizations in Chatham. Prior to joining the Council, Krista worked with a leading technology company providing analysis and feedback on a variety of content and application types to assure quality experience by end users. She has also been a freelance writer and editor.

Please join us in thanking Mel and welcoming Krista.

Chatham Demographics

As we start yet another year and a new decade—2020—a quote of Maggie Kuhn should certainly cause us to pause: “By the year of 2020—the year of perfect vision—the old will outnumber the young.” A visionary, she died in 1995, at the age of 89.

Founder of the Gray Panthers movement, after being forced to retire at the then-mandatory retirement age of 65, Maggie Kuhn led the fight against ageism. She was noted for claiming that "old people and women constitute America's biggest untapped and undervalued human energy source.”

The most recent statistics from the State tell us that Chatham is well ahead of the aging population trend, and we better set our sights more clearly and urgently on what this may mean for our community.

The recent 2019 State of Chatham County Report noted that Chatham is the 4th fastest growing county in the state. Between 2018-2038, our total population is projected to grow by 48%. While that’s impressive, consider that our population aged 60 and older is projected to increase by 85% and those aged 85 and older by over 200%.

By 2038, projections show nearly 45,200 persons aged 60 and older (41% of Chatham’s total population) as compared to about 17,300 aged 17 and younger (16%).

So what does this tell us? We need to at least think about the aging of Chatham in decision-making about policies, programs, initiatives and resources in our community. Our graying population has implications for all sectors and aspects of our community.

We need to follow the lead of Maggie Kuhn in being visionary and assertive in valuing and tapping the largely unrealized potential of our seniors.

One way to do this now is to join efforts underway in support of Chatham’s 2018-2023 Aging Plan. To find out more about this Plan, see www.chathamcoa.org.
Beginning in 2020, NC voters will be asked to provide an acceptable photo ID when they vote in person or a copy if voting absentee-by-mail.

Below is a list of acceptable photo IDs for voting in 2020:

**Driver’s license or non-operator ID from NC; does NOT have to be a “Real ID:”**
- Must be valid and unexpired OR expired for one year or less,
- If the voter is over age 65, the driver’s license may be expired if it was unexpired on their 65th birthday.

**Driver’s license or non-operator ID from a different state or territory; does NOT have to be a “Real ID:”**
- Valid ONLY if the person registered to vote within 90 days of the election,
- Must be valid and unexpired OR expired for one year or less,
- If the voter is over age 65, the driver’s license may be expired if it was unexpired on their 65th birthday.

**United States Passport or Passport Card:**
- Must be valid and unexpired OR expired for one year or less,
- If the voter is over age 65, the passport may be expired if it was unexpired on their 65th birthday.

**NC Voter ID Card:**
- If you do not have a picture ID and are registered to vote, a picture ID is available free at your county board of elections at any time until the Friday before the election.
- The Chatham County Board of Elections is located at 984 Thompson Street, Suite D, Pittsboro, NC. Their telephone number is 919-545-8500. They are open from 8 AM until 5 PM Monday through Friday.

**Approved State or Local Government or Charter School Employee ID.**
- Must be approved by the State Board of Elections,
- Visit on the web [voterID.NCSBE.gov](http://voterID.NCSBE.gov) for a list of approved IDs,
- In 2020 only, no expiration date is required.

**Approved College/University Student ID:**
- Must be approved by the State Board of Elections,
- Visit on the web [voterID.NCSBE.gov](http://voterID.NCSBE.gov) for a list of approved IDs,
- In 2020 only, no expiration date is required.

**Tribal Enrollment Card, issued by an:**
- Approved state tribe. Visit on the web [voterID.NCSBE.gov](http://voterID.NCSBE.gov) for a list of approved state tribes, OR
- A federal tribe,
- May be expired OR have no expiration date.

**Military ID Card or Veterans ID Card:**
- May be expired OR have no expiration date.
There are several qualifying exceptions to the Picture ID law. They include:

- Religious objection to being photographed,
- Reasonable impediment that prevents you from obtaining a photo ID or enclosing a copy of your photo ID when voting by mail,
- Natural disaster.

If one of these exceptions applies to you, you will be asked to sign an affidavit declaring you have a qualifying exception to the requirement.

Although all registered voters will be asked for a photo ID at the polls, all registered voters will be allowed to vote with or without a photo ID.

If you do not have a photo ID on election day, you may be asked to vote provisionally if you bring an acceptable photo ID to your county Board of Elections office before canvass (the official tally of votes after the election). You may still vote and have your vote counted by signing an affidavit of reasonable impediment as to why you have not presented a valid photo ID.

Note: This information was accurate as of December 3, 2019.

For more information or questions on the new Voter ID rules, contact the Chatham County Board of Elections at 919-545-8500. They are open from 8 AM until 5 PM Monday through Friday.

The 2020 Primary Election is Coming Soon! Exercise Your Right to Vote.

2020 Primary Election Dates to Remember

January 13, 2020 - Absentee ballots become available for primary election
February 7, 2020 - Voter registration deadline for primary election
February 13, 2020 - One-Stop Early Primary Voting Begins
February 25, 2020 - Last day to request absentee ballot by mail for most voters
February 29, 2020 - Last day of One-Stop Early Primary Voting
March 3, 2020 - Primary Election Day!

For more details, One-Stop early voting, and precinct information contact the Chatham County Board of Elections at 919-545-8500.
Scammed in the New Year: Beware Fake Law Enforcement Representatives

By Sara Pack & Mike Copeland, Chatham County Sheriff’s Office

A popular phone scam has resurfaced over the holiday season, and this one hits close to home. Several residents have reported receiving multiple calls from individuals claiming to be Chatham County Sheriff’s Office deputies. These scammers can be quite convincing, urging residents to pay money in order to avoid charges or jail time.

“The individual is providing a fake contact number that directs callers to a very professional-sounding automated system,” says Corporal Robert Pelkey, a real Sheriff’s Office deputy who quickly identified the scam and began alerting investigators and the public.

Victims who called the fake number were greeted with a reassuring message stating they had reached the Sheriff’s Office non-emergency number and prompting callers to follow additional directions. For example, “Press 1 to file a report or speak with an officer. Press 2 to speak with the warrant division. Press 3 for court services. Press 4 for weapons licensing and permits…” and so on.

Any number pressed redirects the caller to a voicemail option asking the victim to leave his or her contact information and other details. Although it may sound convincing, real law enforcement representatives warn not to trust the voice on the other end of the line.

“The Chatham County Sheriff’s Office will NOT contact you by phone to request money to avoid criminal charges,” says Sheriff’s Office fraud investigator Mike Copeland. “We’ve seen this scam before, but this one is particularly elaborate and has already snared several victims. It’s important to slow down, ask some follow up questions, or hang up the phone—don’t be pressured into confirming any personal information or providing financial card details.”

When in doubt, individuals are welcome to call 911 or the real Chatham County Sheriff’s Office non-emergency line at 919-542-2811 to speak with an officer to confirm any claims.

“It’s jolting when you have unsuspecting victims approaching deputies on the street to ask how to make a payment,” says Lieutenant Sara Pack. “We are incredibly lucky to serve in a county where the public trusts and respects our deputies, so it is especially upsetting that a scammer would attempt to impersonate one of our own to exploit that trust.”

If you believe you or a family member may have been a victim of a scam, don’t hesitate to call authorities. The sooner one takes action, the better. Failure to report a potential scam could allow con artists to continue targeting other victims, whereas early detection and alerts can halt a scam in its tracks.

“Help spread the word to raise awareness of these types of scams and remember to look out for each other, especially during the holiday season,” says Sheriff Mike Roberson. “Phone scams are especially popular this time of year, but staying vigilant and informed is key to protecting yourself and others.”
The New Year is a Great Time to Volunteer!
By Allison Andrews, Volunteer Coordinator

Make a New Year’s Resolution that’s a joy to keep! Volunteer with the Chatham Council on Aging!

We’re growing by leaps and bounds and would love for you to join us as we continue to expand our services to meet our growing needs.

Here’s a sampling of some of our current needs:
- Meals on Wheels Drivers, including Friday drivers for the Goldston area
- Receptionist for VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program)
- Friendly phone callers
- Activity crafters
- Art instructors
- And much more!!

To learn about volunteer opportunities, contact Allison at Allison.andrews@chathamcouncilonaging.org or 919-542-4512.

Would you like us to come to your church or civic group to hear about opportunities for volunteering, our services and ways to participate at our Centers?
Call Krista Westervelt at 919-542-4512

Bothered by incontinence?
We can help!

The Chatham County Council on Aging has supplies available.

Contact Wynne.Fields@chathamcoa.org for your needs,
or call 919-542-4512 ext. 236.

Thank you to the Diaper Bank of North Carolina for their Community Partnership!

For general information on incontinence and aging, visit nafc.org

Looking for a rewarding and hands-on volunteer opportunity with a spirit of camaraderie?

Join our Minor Home Repair Volunteer Crew!

For details, contact Wynne Fields at 919-542-4512 ext 236 or wynne.fields@chathamcoa.org
“And Their Eyes Were Opened...”
By Jo Taliaferro, Community Ambassador

“The Herdmans were absolutely the worst kids in the history of the world. They lied and stole and smoked cigars (even the girls) and talked dirty and hit little kids and cussed their teachers and took the name of the Lord in vain and set fire to Fred Shoemaker’s old broken-down toolhouse.” In the wonderful children’s book *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* by Barbara Robinson, nobody wants the 6 Herdman kids to be in their church’s Christmas pageant. Raised by a single mom, they were mean, misbehaved, and just…different. They also didn’t go to Sunday school, and they certainly did not know the story of Christmas. But when they bully the regular cast members into letting them play the lead roles of Mary, Joseph, the Three Wise Men, and the Angel of the Lord, everyone is shocked by their unconventional performance. They were uncertain about where to go and what to do, but that made the pageant even better. It was more realistic because it was probably how the real Holy Family and Wise Men felt. The pageant was profoundly moving for everybody and ended up being the best one ever!

Similarly, when my husband and I moved to Pittsboro North Carolina about two years ago, we didn’t know a thing about the area; the people, the culture, the expectations of others...we just didn’t know. We didn’t know where to get groceries, how to use Chatham Transit, or what events had become traditions around the area. We also didn’t know the customs or the unwritten rules. I didn’t know about the Chatham County Council on Aging until last July when I saw an ad about the Community Ambassador Program. I called the agency, saying that I would love to be a part of that training, and would love to start giving back to the community now that we were settled and had put down some roots. I spoke to an agency intern, and she sounded very positive about my participation in the Ambassador training as well as my participation as a community volunteer for the Council! I told her my situation and it seemed to be no problem. So, by faith, my Seeing Eye® dog and I caught Chatham Transit, and walked in late to the very first training session. I was introduced to so many people that day, and I wondered if this was really the right thing for me to be a part of. Surely, you’ve been in a similar situation during your lifetime, trying to find that niche that fit you like a glove.

As a blind person, I didn’t necessarily fit the gloves I was expected to wear in Pittsboro, in Siler City, and in Chapel Hill; sometimes the gloves were too tight, sometimes so loose they fell off, and sometimes they just weren’t there at all! It reminded me of the first time I got on a bicycle. Sure, my dad was there in case I needed help, but I didn’t want any help! I just wanted to ride a bicycle like everyone else, and have a bell that I could ring to let people know I was there. Also, my bicycle had to be red, it just had to be red, nothing else would do! So my dad (after seeing me lose my balance, hit my head, and knock out a tooth a couple of times), decided that he would buy me a tandem bicycle, one of those bikes meant for two people. It was the best bike in the whole world! I couldn’t believe it! I actually stayed on the seat! Yes, we changed the bell so it would be on the back handlebars, and my father accused me of never peddling a single inch the whole ride (maybe I didn’t), but I sure had a good time! This is just one of a myriad of adaptations I would be making my whole life long so that I could be a part of everything that any other kid or any other adult participated in.
Of course, I also went to the movies. Sometimes people sitting next to me described what was going on in the movie, and sometimes they didn’t. When they did, it was wonderful! And when audio description came about in 1990, I was there to cheer for the people who decided it was important and necessary, so that people who were blind or people who could not hear could get the same pleasure or disappointment out of a movie that anybody else did. With this wonderful innovation, people who could not see the screen would wear headphones to receive the description (either from a track that paralleled the track that sighted people watched, or they heard a live person describing backstage), and all of these words and pictures and actions and sounds came through the headphones so as not to disturb others in the theater. Now I could laugh at the same time everybody else did, instead of waiting for someone to say oh that was so funny, this person did this, or they did that, and then I would laugh after everyone else had had their own chuckles. That is what I call inclusive.

Inclusive, a word that means different things to different people. To me, it is not just the place, the furniture that might be lower or higher depending on what people prefer to sit on. It’s not just ramps built for people in wheelchairs, or facilities with no stairs. It’s not just braille on restroom doors or on elevators so people know what floor they’re on and what floor to go to. It’s more than that. Inclusiveness is the whole program. For instance, changing the font size so that people who don’t see as well as they once did can have larger print to read along with everyone else. It’s putting materials in an electronic format so that people who can’t see or can’t hear will still be able to read along with their peers. During our graduation ceremony, people read a pledge, or mission statement, out loud together about what we would do as community ambassadors for the Council on Aging. I was fortunate enough to get that statement by email so I could memorize it. I didn’t have to worry about putting it into a certain format, I just put it in my brain. Saying the lines over and over again, ‘til I had it down pat. Sometimes you have to make your own inclusiveness. And that’s what I did.

Without meaning to, we sometimes exclude people from our midst. We make assumptions about what they can or can’t do. When we don’t understand, we don’t ask. We just do what we think is best. Making assumptions is probably the worst thing one can do when interacting with a person with a disability. I get asked all the time whether I have someone at home who helps me. It is assumed that I either have “super” hearing, or that because I can’t see, I can’t hear either. People think that since I don’t have eyesight, I can’t walk without help. People assume that the words “watch” “see” and “look” mean nothing to me! How do I dress? Bathe? Do laundry? Go skiing? Having attended public schools all my life, going to Germany as an exchange student and teaching Spanish all seemed normal to me (whatever normal is). But sometimes others believe that a person who is blind can do nothing for themselves. So, I implore you to ask before assuming someone needs or wants help. If I say, “no thank you”, take that as truth and not just politeness. OK, so I’m never going to fly a plane. I’ll never see my husband’s face. But I certainly will find a place in the best Christmas pageant in the whole world!
All About Community Alternatives Program for Disabled Adults
By Danielle White, Health Promotion & Policy Division, Chatham County Public Health Department

Did You Know that according to Chatham County, NC data, the population estimate as of July 2018 is 73,139 and 24.4% or 29,975 folks are 65 and older? Did you know that 53% of North Carolinians age 60 and over are caregivers or being cared for?

Chances are you or someone you know has family members or friends who are aging and/or disabled and are facing nursing home placement but wish to remain living in their homes.

If so, the Chatham County Public Health Department has a Medicaid-funded program called the Community Alternatives Program for Disabled Adults or CAP/DA, which provide services to help those who are eligible.

CAP services include:
- Case management
- In-home aide
- Respite care
- Telephone alert system
- Other CAP waiver items.

One cherished CAP participant shared the following story:

“When asked if I would like to share my experience about CAP/DA Traditional and CAP/DA Choice Programs, I was elated. I was on the CAP Traditional Program for over 10 years. To give you a little history of myself, I was born without my left hip, two spinal defects, Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA), and Degenerative Disc Disease. I underwent 12 surgeries and spent over 3 years of my life in an Orthopedic Hospital. I have never been able to bathe completely, tie my shoes, dress completely, but I can walk. My parents never tired of my needs. My husband took over my needs when we married over 34 years ago.

I was able to work for almost 20 years, but my pain level forced early retirement. My RA made it impossible to use my right knee which meant I was immobile. My husband had to work, so it was a difficult time in my life. The CAP Traditional Program offered peace of mind for both of us. My needs were finally being taken care of on a daily basis, light housekeeping, and help with errands like getting groceries once a week. Our stress level dropped, making room for quality time again.

Shvaughn Ross, my case manager, shared CAP Choice with me. I was eager to learn more. Having the choice of my caregiver was wonderful. Nearing retirement, my best friend, my husband, was my choice. He has been my caregiver for 5 years now. I am grateful for both programs. The quality of my life has been forever changed.”

This is just one of many examples of what CAP means to the Chatham community.

If you have questions, need additional information about eligibility or would like to make a referral, please contact: Shvaughn J. Ross, SW, Lead CAP Case Manager, at 919-542-8265 or shvaughn.ross@chathamnc.org, or Jana Wiley, SW, CAP Case Manager, at 919-742-5641 or jana.wiley@chathamnc.org. You can also find more information online at www.chathamnc.org/cap.
Have you noticed changes in your vision? Is reading, using the computer or watching television becoming more difficult? If you are over the age of 65, it is recommended that you see the Eye Doctor every year or two.

As we age, the lenses in our eyes become less flexible, affecting how we see day to day. A regular eye exam is an important part of staying healthy. An eye exam can also address concerns you have and help you protect and preserve your vision for a lifetime.

Here are changes that merit a visit to the Eye Doctor:

- Pain in the eye, even if occasional
- Double or blurred vision
- Trouble seeing clearly either near or far
- Difficulty seeing while driving, or seeing a halo around road signs, especially at night
- Persistent dry eye

Once you have made your appointment with the eye doctor, prepare for your visit by bringing the following:

- Your prescription glasses or contact lenses
- A list of all of your current medications
- A list of any vision issues you have had in the last six months
- Be prepared to discuss your family history, especially if your family has a history of glaucoma, macular degeneration, cornea disease or blindness.
- Let your doctor know if you are diabetic or have high blood pressure, as these conditions are risk factors for vision loss.

Protecting Your Vision

- Wear protective eye gear when working outdoors, while using machinery or heavy equipment, and while using chemicals, including household cleaners.
- Wear UV blocking sunglasses whenever you are outside.
- Never look directly at the sun.
- Exercise regularly—this is good for your vision and your overall health.
- Eat eye-healthy foods including citrus fruits, dark green leafy vegetables, cold water fish, and nuts.

For more information, visit unceye.org or call UNC Ophthalmology for an appointment at one of their 10 locations in North Carolina 984-974-2020.

Individuals who find themselves or a loved one in need of immediate mental health support are encouraged to call Cardinal Innovations 24/7 Access/Crisis Line, 1.800.939.5911. When in doubt, please reach out!

You can also contact Daymark, Chatham’s local provider, at 919-663-2955. Daymark is located at 1105 East Cardinal Street, Siler City, NC 27344.
Changes Come to Medicare in 2020
By Ed Regan, Chatham’s Delegate to the Senior Tar Heel Legislature

Introduction
The regular Medicare Open Enrollment Period (OEP) for 2020 concluded on December 7, 2019. SHIIP volunteer counselors working under the guidance of the State Department of Insurance and in cooperation with the Chatham County Council on Aging provided assistance to more than 180 county residents during this period. There are a number of significant changes that affect Medicare benefits in 2020. The most important of these are summarized in this article.

A New Enrollment Period of Medicare Advantage Plans
2020 will begin with another Open Enrollment Period for Medicare Beneficiaries who currently are enrolled in Medicare Advantage (MA) Plans. This is a major change from earlier years, when Medicare Advantage plan members were only permitted to disenroll from MA plans during the Plan year.

Beginning on January 1, 2020 and extending through March 31, 2020, Medicare recipients who were covered by a MA plan during 2019 can make any of the following changes to their Medicare coverage.

1) They can switch from their current MA Plan (with or without drug coverage) to another MA Plan (with or without drug coverage)
2) They can disenroll from MA Plan (with or without drug coverage) and return to original Medicare (Parts A and B) and join a Part D plan.

This is, however, a limited Open Enrollment Period. Medicare beneficiaries cannot make any of the following changes:

1) Switch from original Medicare to an MA Plan
2) Join a Part D plan if they are covered by original Medicare
3) Switch from one Part D plan to another if they are covered by original Medicare.

Changes that Medicare beneficiaries make during this new Open Enrollment Period will be effective the first of the month after the request is received by the plan.

Medicare Supplements (Medigap): Changes in 2020

There are two important changes to Medicare Supplements (also known as Medigap plans) affecting people who become eligible for Medicare on or after January 1, 2020. Two supplements are closed to newly eligible Medicare recipients and one new supplement has come on the market.

As of January 1, 2020, newly eligible Medicare beneficiaries cannot enroll in either Plan F or Plan C Medicare supplements. These plans frequently were referred to as “first dollar” plans because they paid for virtually all costs for eligible medical services that were not covered by original Medicare. These costs include the annual Part B deductible and the 20% of eligible medical costs (co-
insurance) not covered by original Medicare.

Medicare beneficiaries who enrolled in Plan F or Plan C prior to 2020 may keep their plans. Also, anyone who was Medicare eligible prior to January 1, 2020 may apply for Plan C and Plan F if these still are offered by insurers serving their area.

One new Medicare supplement now is available to Medicare beneficiaries. A high deductible Plan G has been introduced. Individuals who enroll in this plan must pay the portion of eligible costs not covered by original Medicare (copayments, co-insurance, deductibles) out of their own pocket before the High deductible Plan G starts paying. The annual deductible for this new plan is $2,180.

The new High Deductible Plan G has a lower premium than the standard Plan G. For example, the monthly premium for a standard Plan G ranges from approximately $103 to $713 for a 65 year old male while the monthly premium for the High Deductible Plan G ranges from $34 to $53. Currently, six companies are offering the new high deductible plan in North Carolina.

**Other Important Changes in 2020**

A number of Medicare costs are subject to annual adjustments, including the annual deductibles for Parts A and B, the annual premium for Part B, and the coverage gap (“donut hole”) in Part D Medicare prescription drug plans. The changes for 2020 are listed below.

Part A deductible increases to $1,408 and the annual Part B deductible rises to $198.

The Part B monthly premium increases to $144.60.

The coverage gap (“Donut Hole”) for Part D Medicare Prescription Drug plans continues to shrink in 2020. The gap begins when an individual’s total drug cost reaches $4,020 (up from $3,820 in 2019). The gap continues until total prescription drug cost reaches $6,350. Catastrophic coverage begins at this point.

Medicare Part D plans will pay most of the cost for prescriptions while beneficiaries are in the coverage gap. In 2020, beneficiaries will pay only 25% of the cost of both brand-name and generic drugs while in the “donut hole.” This percentage for generic drugs is down from 37% in 2019.

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For appointments with the Seniors’ Health Insurance Information Program, please contact your Chatham County SHIIP Coordinator Beth Moran at 919-742-3975 ext 223 or call SHIIP Toll Free at 1-855-408-1212
Member Inspiration—Ms. Regina Powell
By David Mallard—Facility Manager/Fitness Specialist, Chatham COA—Western Senior Center

Most of our participants find their way to the Council on Aging by word of mouth—a friend or family member’s referral—and come join the activities and fitness programs with a pretty carefree and laid back attitude. That wasn’t the case for Ms. Regina Powell. Once she found we had a Fitness Center, and the perfect machine for her to burn calories safely, Ms. Regina came with determination and a fury to work on her health goals. She signed up with us the first week in October and after several visits, she was burning serious calories and improving her cardiovascular endurance with every workout. The machine she found, the NuStep, is a specially designed machine that allows the user to build low impact leg strength, and to engage in arm movements to the degree that with moderate effort, one can elevate their heart rate to effectively burn calories. Burning calories and incorporating subtle diet changes can lead most anyone to decreasing their body-weight.

That’s exactly the plan of attack Ms. Regina followed. Within several weeks, she was pushing her limits and made a decision to keep the routine going. After 10 weeks, she looked back to see how far she’d come. Ms. Regina was elated; she let us know that she lost an amazing 78 pounds! Her workouts were also making her stronger, giving her more energy, and making her feel better about herself. She started making better food choices to support her workouts, and her own determination continues to flourish. The Wellness Staff at the Council on Aging has seen some very dramatic changes over the years, but Ms. Regina’s drive to better her health, and her amazing weight loss numbers rank at the top.

If you need help with weight-loss, mobility, flexibility, strength training or other goals, our trained staff can help you get started as well. Please stop by or call our Eastern Chatham (Pittsboro) or Western Chatham (Siler City) Centers to learn how to get started.

Check out the Council’s Online Calendar for activities and opportunities:
www.chathamcoa.org/activities/calendars

How Has the Council Impacted Your Family? We’d Love to Hear from You!

Email:
krista.westervelt@chathamcoa.org
or write us a letter:
Chatham Council on Aging
PO Box 715
Pittsboro, NC 27312
French Onion Soup & Cheese Toast (serves 6)

**Ingredients:**
- 4 lb onions, any type
- 4 cloves garlic
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp vinegar, any type (optional)
- 3 tsp salt
- pepper
- 8 cups water
- 6 slices bread
- 1½ cups cheddar, grated

**For Soup:**
1. Peel onions, then cut into half-moon slices. Peel & slice garlic.
2. Melt butter in large pot on medium heat
3. Add onions, garlic & bay leaves. Cover and cook for 10 minutes.
4. After 10 minutes, stir onions and add vinegar.
5. Cover and cook for 1 hour, stirring every 20 minutes. When onions at bottom stick & turn dark with carmelization, add a splash of water to loosen them.
6. When onions are approx. 1/4 of original volume, add all the water, along with salt & pepper.
7. Turn heat to low, cover pot and simmer for one hour.
8. Salt & pepper to taste. Ladle and serve.

**For Cheese Toast:**
1. Top bread slices with grated cheese.
2. Place slices on broiler-safe pan.
3. Broil in oven until just until cheese is bubbly, being sure to keep an eye on the bread to avoid over-broiling it!
4. Serve one toast slice with each serving of soup!

(Adapted from *Good and Cheap* by Leanne Brown)

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**New Year’s Word Search Puzzle**

B P M Q N U I T Z I H V P N N
E A B Q O E N I W V V W I O O
Y M E T I Q I O U T I R G I B
E B G H T U T N S L I A T T B
D D I G A M I A O S M L I C I
B U N I R N O I T U L O S E R
K R N N B T X E N D W M U L F
W A I D E E N E W T C K G F M
O D N I L D H X M M I P L E J
N N G M E S N X U I B U A R H
S E C X C S D R A C X N S Q M
J L M R A C F X P U Y J S O D
V A S K R O W E R I F Y E M L
B C P S I T T E F N O C S S O
C W D L O S G N I E T E R G C

**BEGINNING**
- Reflection
- Calendar
- Celebration
- Confetti
- End
- Fireworks
- Glasses
- Greetings
- In
- Midnight
- New
- Old
- Out

**REFLECTION**
- Resolution
- Cards
- Snow
- Toast
- Wine
- Fireworks
- Glasses
- Greetings
- In
- Midnight
- New
- Old
- Out
Dates to Remember 2020

Arthritis Exercise

At ECSC Pittsboro:
**Times:** 8 am and 10 am classes  
**Days:** Mondays and Fridays  
**Dates:** January 6th - March 2nd  
Please sign up with Jackie  
919-542-4512 ext 232  
Jackie.Green@chathamcoa.org

At WCSC Siler City:
**Times:** 10:30-11:30 am  
**Days:** Mondays  
**Dates:** January 6th - February 24th.  
**Times:** 10:30am-11:30am

Led by David Mallard, this class focuses on warming up the joints, flexibility, and minor strengthening components. Exercises are certified by the Arthritis Foundation, and of course David always keeps it fun and the class energy high by providing Motown Hits, and your Favorite Oldies.

Call 919-742-3975 to register

Lunch Bunch Pittsboro

January 3—Greek Kouzina, Pittsboro  
February 7—Modern Life Deli & Drinks, Pittsboro  
March 6—Root Cellar & Café, Pittsboro  
April 3—Michoacan Mexican, Pittsboro  
May 1—Moon Asian Bistro, Chapel Hill  
June 5—Café Vesuvia, Sanford

Please sign up at least a week before. For more info or to sign up, contact Jackie Green at 919-542-4512.

Lunch Bunch Siler City

January 3 - Sir Pizza, Siler City  
February 7 - American Road House, Asheboro  
March 6 - Everything under the Bun, Asheboro

Please sign up at least a week before. For more info or to sign up, contact Faye Tillman at 919-742-3975.

3 Gs Men’s Group—Geezers, Gulpers and Gardeners

**Thursday Mornings—ECSC**  
**8:30-10:00am**  
Coffee and light snack, checkers, talking, bocce, corn-hole and more.

For a complete calendar of events go to www.chathamcoa.org/activities
### Support Groups

**Parkinson’s Support**  
2nd Wednesday at 1pm (ECSC)

**Pittsboro Caregiver Support**  
3rd Monday at 6pm (ECSC)

**Siler City Caregiver Support**  
4th Monday at 2pm (WCSC)

**Diabetes Support**  
2nd Wednesday at 10am (WCSC)  
**New!** 2nd Thursday at 10 am (ECSC)

Call Susan Hardy for more information at 919-542-4512 or susan.hardy@chathamcoa.org

### Health & Wellness Discussion Group

**3rd Friday of the month at ECSC  2pm**

The group meets the third Friday of every month at 2pm at the Eastern Chatham Senior Center in Pittsboro.

To sign up or for more information, please contact Alan Russo at 919-542-4512 or e-mail at alan.russo@chathamcoa.org

### Conversations on Grief

**Wednesdays starting in April at the Eastern Chatham Senior Center, Pittsboro**

Struggling after the death of a family member or friend? Conversations on Grief offers compassionate support and helpful information. Each conversation provides education on a different aspect of grief and grieving. We encourage you to attend all conversations, but you are also welcome to attend those of interest to you.

- **April 15 - Understanding Grief**
- **April 22 - Communicating My Needs**
- **April 29 - Who Am I Now?**
- **May 6 - Where Do I Go From Here?**

Please register by calling Susan Hardy at 919-542-4512 ext. 231

### Walking through Grief

10 Week Session on Fridays from 10:45 am to 12 noon

Beginning on January 24th and running through March 27th

**At the ECSC, Pittsboro**

Please RSVP to Jackie Green at 919-542-4512

**Registrations Limited**

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ECSC: Eastern Chatham Center (919-542-4512) 365 Hwy 87 N, Pittsboro

WCSC: Western Chatham Center (919-742-3975) 112 Village Lake Rd, Siler City
Do You Help An Older Relative or Friend?

*Powerful Tools for Caregivers* is an educational program designed to provide you with the tools you need to take care of yourself.

Classes consist of six, 1½ hour class sessions held weekly.

**Western Chatham Senior Center**
112 Village Lake Road
Siler City, NC 27344
919-742-3975

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<td>Thursday, April 30, 2020</td>
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**Estimated Book Cost:** $30.00 (provided free of charge to participants)

*Voluntary contributions to the Chatham County Council on Aging are welcomed.*

Light refreshments will be provided and a copy of The Caregiver Helpbook.

Co-Leaders:  
Susan C. Hardy, Chatham Co. Council on Aging  
Beth Moran, Chatham Co. Council on Aging  
Phyllis Smith, NC Cooperative Extension

To register, call Beth Moran, Human Services Care Assistant at Western Chatham Senior Center (919) 742-3975 ext. 223. For more information, contact Beth Moran: [bth.moran@chathamcountycouncilonaging.org](mailto:bth.moran@chathamcountycouncilonaging.org)

Need Respite care during class sessions? Please contact Beth Moran by Monday, March 16, 2020

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For a complete calendar of events go to [www.chathamcoa.org/activities](http://www.chathamcoa.org/activities)
Seniors’ Wellness Discussion
By Chatham Health Department
Tuesday, January 28th
10 am-11 am

The Chatham Health promotions team will let you share what topics you’d like scheduled in 2020.

Here’s your chance to give direct input on which health topics are important to you!

Western Chatham Senior Center, Siler City

Why Are Kidneys So Important?
Free Presentation

Presented by Katey Cipriani, National Kidney Foundation

Learn why your kidneys are so important and what you can do to protect them.

Friday, January 24th
10 am-11 am

Western Chatham Senior Center
Siler City

VITA
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

The Council on Aging will be hosting VITA
(Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) from February 8 - April 15, 2020.

Tuesdays 1-4 pm at the ECSC
Wednesdays 10 am - 2 pm at the WCSC
Saturdays 10 am - 3 pm at the ECSC

IMPORTANT NOTE: February 22 and March 21 will be at the WCSC

Contact the centers listed below for more information.

Geri-Fit

Mondays and Fridays at the ECSC
Running from Monday, March 16th through Monday, April 13th
8 am and 10 am sessions

Please sign up at least 2 weeks before.

For more info or to register, please contact Jackie Green at 919-542-4512 or jackie.green@chathamcoa.org

ECSC: Eastern Chatham Center (919-542-4512) 365 Hwy 87 N, Pittsboro
WCSC: Western Chatham Center (919-742-3975) 112 Village Lake Rd, Siler City
Feeling frustrated, alone, overwhelmed?
Come join our Caregivers' Support Group

There will be time for sharing, listening and helping each other.
Caregiver's Support Group Meetings will be held the 4th Monday of every month
from 2:00-3:00pm
Western Chatham Center, Siler City
Please call if you plan to attend!
Beth Moran—Human Services Care Assistant at 919-742-3975

Tai Chi—Mondays through February 11th
Eastern Chatham Center
Contact Liz Lahti 919-542-4512

Veterans Service Officer
Every Wednesday, 10am-2pm
Western Center Conference Room, Siler City

2020 Chatham County Senior Games & SilverArts

SAVE the DATE
APRIL 24—MAY 8, 2020

Early Bird Registration February 17-28, 2020
Registration Deadline: March 20, 2020
Register Online: http://torch.ncseniorgames.org/

Track/ Field
Archery
SilverArts
Football Throw
Softball Throw
Disc Golf
Golf
Croquet
Swimming
Tennis
Bocce
Bowling
Table Tennis
Cycling
Pickleball
Basketball Shoot
Corn Hole

For More Information:
Liz Lahti, 919-542-4512
liz.lahti@chathamcoa.org
Serving Chatham Seniors for Over 45 Years

- Assistive Equipment Loan Program
- Caregiver Respite & Support Group
- Chatham County Senior Games and SilverArts
- Congregate Meals
- Diabetic Support Group
- Disaster Preparation
- Emergency Meals
- Emergency Energy Assistance
- Family Caregiver Support
- Health Education
- Heat-Relief Fan Distribution
- Hiking Club
- Housing Information
- Income Tax Assistance (VITA)
- Incontinence Supplies
- Information & Options Counseling
- In-Home Aide Service
- Legal Services
- Meals on Wheels and Frozen Meals
- Medical Transportation
- Minor Home Repair
- Reporting Neglect/Abuse/Exploitation
- Senior Center Activities
- Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program-SHIIP
- Telephone Reassurance
- Transportation
- Travelers Club
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Wellness Program
- Information & Assistance Mental Health
- Hospice
- Adult Day Care/Health Rehabilitation Services
- Medicaid and Medicare A/B
- Social Security Benefits
- www.chathamcouncilonaging.org

Eastern Chatham Senior Center
365 Highway 87 North
PO Box 715
Pittsboro, NC 27312
PHONE (919) 542-4512
FAX (919) 542-5191

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112 Village Lake Road
Siler City, NC 27344
PHONE (919) 742-3975
FAX (919) 742-7440